

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban unions set mass May Day march, solidarity conference
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 86/NO. 11 MARCH 21, 2022

Truckers fight gov’t mandates, attacks on their livelihoods

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

HAGERSTOWN, Md. — Hundreds of “big rig” tractor trailer trucks and an estimated 1,000 vehicles overall — cars, pick-ups, motorcycles, and RVs — are crammed into the Speedway, an auto race track here, for People’s Convoy protests. More were still coming when a Socialist Workers Party team came to express solidarity March 8.

Since arriving two days earlier, the truckers organized nightly rallies, morning meetings, and daily drive-arounds over the beltway and other highways surrounding the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area to draw attention to their demands. They call for an end to government COVID-19 mandates that attempt to force people to get vaccinated or face losing their jobs and other restrictions.

The protests also express truckers’ anger at action by the government, trucking bosses and brokers that threaten

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Join the fight to rid the world of the threat of nuclear war

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

On the eve of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Vladimir Putin issued a warning, “Anyone who tries to interfere with us ... must know that Russia’s response will be immediate and will lead you to such consequences as you have never before experienced in your history.” In case anyone misunderstood, he added that Russia remains, “one of the most powerful nuclear powers.” He upped the threat a few days later, announcing he had put Russian nuclear weapons on high alert.

Just prior to Moscow’s murderous invasion, the Pentagon had doubled the flights of its E-6 aircraft — a vital part of its nuclear command-and-control network. The French government responded to Moscow’s nuclear alert by putting to sea a second nuclear-armed submarine for the first time since 1997.

Ever since these weapons of destruction

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Defeat Moscow’s war on Ukraine! Defend Ukraine independence! All US troops, nuclear arms out of Europe!



ua.tribuna.com

“Kherson is Ukraine,” says sign at March 5 protest that confronted Moscow’s troops occupying city of Kherson. Even after soldiers shot in the air, protesters stood their ground.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Two weeks into their invasion of Ukraine, Moscow’s forces are widening their assaults — slaughtering hundreds and devastating cities, leading to a fast-growing refugee crisis. At the same time, President Vladimir Putin’s forces confront courageous resistance

forces some 2,000 people demonstrated against the occupation, defying a curfew. One man, cheered by onlookers, jumped on a passing Russian armored vehicle and waved a Ukrainian flag. The crowd stood their ground as Russian

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Join SWP campaigning against Moscow’s war to crush Ukraine



Militant/Mike Shur

Sara Lobman, left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate, campaigns at protest of thousands in solidarity with Ukraine in New York’s Times Square March 5.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

From protests against Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine, to strike picket lines, truck stops, at workers’ doorsteps and with co-workers, Socialist Workers Party members are discussing the party’s statement: “Defend Ukraine’s independence! For defeat of Moscow’s inva-

sion! U.S. troops, nuclear arms out of Europe, all of Europe!”

Through this effort they’re making a good start on the nine-week drive to sell 1,600 *Militant* subscriptions and the same number of books on working-class and revolutionary struggles. And to raise \$165,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund.

Some 3,000 people demonstrated in New York City’s Times Square March 5 in defense of Ukraine’s sovereignty. Members and supporters of the SWP participated in the action, selling 13 *Militant* subscriptions, 153 copies of the paper and seven books, including two copies of *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* by Abram Leon.

“All over the world people support the Ukrainian people,” Zura Parkoja from the country of Georgia told Joanne Kuniansky, SWP candidate for Congress in New Jersey. The Putin regime invaded Georgia in 2008, seizing territory and setting up two pro-Moscow state-lets of South Ossetia

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CLASS-STRUGGLE ROAD TO END WAR IN UKRAINE — see page 9

all across the country, including from Ukrainians in the few cities Moscow has been able to occupy. It has inspired solidarity from working people worldwide, including in Russia.

In Kherson, in southern Ukraine, two days after the city fell to Putin’s

Striking Iowa Machinists reject bosses’ takeback offers, win support

BY DAN FEIN

DAVENPORT, Iowa — Members of the International Association of Machinists on strike at Eaton Corporation’s Mission Systems Division here voted March 4 to reject for a second time a company takeback contract. The vote was 97% against. IAM Local 388 and Local 1191 went on strike Feb. 18 after voting by 98% to turn down the bosses’ demands.

There are 269 IAM members among the 360 hourly employees. Because Iowa

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Biden State of the Union talk hypes US war machine, shows rulers’ crisis

BY TERRY EVANS

President Joseph Biden’s State of the Union speech March 1 kicked off an effort to use Moscow’s bloody invasion of Ukraine to justify strengthening the U.S. imperialist war machine. “We, the United States of America, stand with the Ukrainian people,” he claimed. But there is no “we,” the class interests of

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Quebec co-op strikers say, ‘We are fighting for those to come’

New Zealand CHEP pallet workers strike wins gains

25 years after split-jury verdict Louisiana inmate finally freed

BY JANET POST

Louisiana state prison inmate Brandon Jackson was released on parole Feb. 11 after serving 25 years of a 40-year sentence. He had been charged with robbing an Applebee’s restaurant at gunpoint in 1997. Jackson’s original conviction was tainted, but that was not the reason the parole board gave for freeing him.

Despite the Bill of Rights’ requirement of a unanimous jury — which is key to ensuring the constitutional right not to be imprisoned unless found guilty “beyond a reasonable doubt” — Jackson, who is Black, was convicted by a split-jury vote of 10 to 2. The two dissenting jurors were Black.

At the time, Louisiana, Oregon and the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico allowed nonunanimous verdicts in criminal cases. In all of the other 48 states, a split jury — often called a “hung jury” — means the accused must be freed or given a new trial.

In April 2020 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution’s “right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury” — including a unanimous verdict — applies not only to federal trials but also to the states. Under public pressure, Louisiana had finally banned nonunanimous verdicts in 2019. But the court’s ruling was not made retroactive, and Jackson’s petition for a new trial is still pending.

Sheila Earls, whose son Brandon was nearing 10 years prison in 2021 after being convicted of murder in 2009 in a split verdict, spoke to the New Orleans *Advocate* after the Supreme Court rul-

ing. “The people [who’ve] served 10, 20, 30 years they shouldn’t have served, you’re just going to leave them in the dungeon,” Earls noted. “They’re done. That doesn’t even logically make sense. Justice should not have a time limit.”

There are currently 1,500 prisoners in Louisiana, 80% of whom are Black. Hundreds in Oregon were convicted by split juries, 40% of all felony jury verdicts.

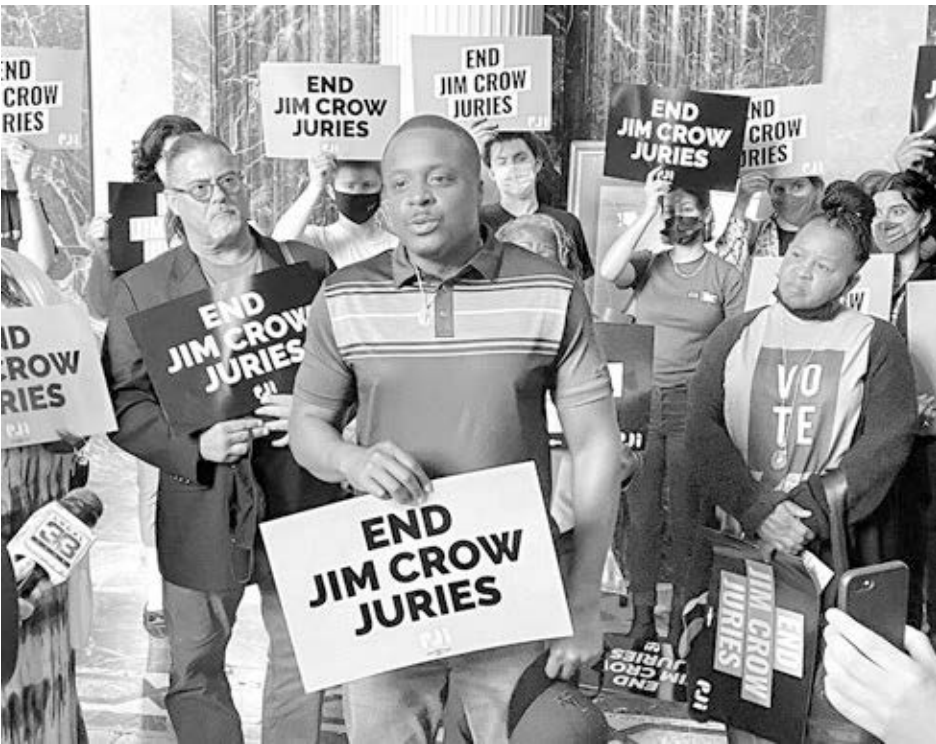
Split verdicts rooted in Jim Crow

The Louisiana state government authorized guilty verdicts if at least nine out of 12 jurors approved — it was later changed to at least 10 — in 1898 in the wake of the 1877 overthrow of Radical Reconstruction and the deepening imposition of brutally enforced Jim Crow segregation.

It was adopted by a Louisiana state constitutional convention, in their words, to “perpetuate the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race in Louisiana.”

The dominant sectors of rapidly expanding industrial and financial capital in the U.S. brokered a deal to withdraw Union troops from the South, setting in motion an accelerating reign of terror by vigilante groups like the Ku Klux Klan. The bloody defeat of Radical Reconstruction in 1877 was the worst setback for African Americans and the entire working class in U.S. history.

In Oregon the split jury-verdict was enacted in 1934, during the Great Depression when there was a wave of anti-immigrant, antisemitic, anti-Catholic and anti-Asian reaction. In Puerto Rico the split-jury verdict was enacted



Protest last May in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, calling for new trials for 1,500 prisoners convicted in split-jury verdicts — a product of the rise of Jim Crow segregation and terror.

in 1948, when the colonial government launched a wave of repression, including prosecutions against leaders of the revolutionary independence movement there.

Allowing split juries makes it easier for prosecutors to win convictions without convincing evidence. It undermines the democratic and constitutional rights of all working people, disproportionately affecting the accused who are Black.

Jackson, now 50, finally walked

out of jail in Louisiana a free man after the unanimous vote by the parole board members, who pointed to his record of good behavior in prison. But he was shackled with onerous conditions, including a curfew, check-ins with his parole officer and monthly community service.

As a precondition for the parole board to free Jackson, he had to say he was guilty, even though he has always claimed his innocence.

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Rachele Fruit, Governor

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Lisa Potash, US Senate
Sam Manuel, Governor

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John Hawkins, US Senate
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Ohio

Samir Hazboun, US Senate

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, Governor
Gerardo Sánchez, US Congress

Washington, DC

James Harris, Mayor
Arlene Rubinstein, Delegate to House

THE MILITANT

Protest ‘woke’ attacks on women’s rights fighters

Threats have been increasing against those who protect women’s rights, activities and spaces while holding the scientific view, held by millions, that a person’s sex is biologically determined. The ‘Militant’ opposes the use of “hate crime” laws to harass those who speak out.



Militant/Catharina Tirsén
Protest Feb. 24 in Wales against arrest of women’s rights fighter Jennifer Swayne.

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Campaign against Moscow war

Continued from front page

and Abkhazia. “It’s not a fight just for Ukraine. It’s the world’s fight.”

Parkoja said he backs the call for the U.S. government to impose a no-fly zone over Ukraine. Kuniansky disagreed. “Washington and other imperialist governments are no friend of working people. They just want to advance the interest of their own capitalist class,” she said. Parkoja got a *Militant* subscription.

“I don’t want another Afghanistan in Ukraine,” Travon Brown, a 28-year-old veteran of the war in Afghanistan, told SWP member Janice Lynn at a March 5 protest in Atlanta against Moscow’s war. “If we get the U.S. military involved that would start another world war.”

“The only thing that will stop a world war is for working people in Ukraine, in this country, and elsewhere to take political power into our own hands,” Lynn said. “And carry out a foreign policy in the interests of the working class.”

At a rally of some 75 people in Dallas, SWP leader Dennis Richter was among the speakers who addressed the crowd, March 5. “We support the courageous fight of the Ukrainians to take back their country,” Richter said. “This fight is with Moscow not the Russian people,” he said to applause. He said opponents of Moscow’s war should also demand U.S. troops and arms out of Europe. This was controversial, but many wanted to discuss it after he spoke.

Discussions at Texas truck stop

The following day at the Pilot truck stop in Hurst, Texas, Gerardo Sánchez, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress, spoke with truck driver Gerry Turner. “I’m just returning from the convoy in Utah and Wyoming,” he said, where truckers were protesting government vaccination mandates. “There were a lot of people on both sides of the road cheering us on.”

“After fuel and operating expenses,” Turner said, truckers have “hardly anything left.” He told Sánchez he opposed Moscow’s war, picked up a copy of the *Militant* and donated \$4 toward the paper’s fund.

At a truck stop in California’s Central Valley, SWP members talked with driver Otis Youngblood. “Russia should get out,” he said. “The U.S. should get out of there as well. Both are just out for their own selves.”

Youngblood is a part-time trucker who farms on a small plot near Fresno. After hearing the *Militant* is covering the fight of farmers to keep their land, he decided to subscribe, reports Betsey Stone.

In Cincinnati over 150 people rallied on the steps of City Hall Feb. 28. The action was organized by two Ukrainian women, Nazly Mamedova and Jane Nemic, who have been winning support from workers in the U.S. and getting material aid to relatives fighting in Ukraine. Members of the Amerian Jewish Committee participated in the rally.

“Ukrainians have been fighting for their own identity,” said Mamedova at the demonstration. “They’re a sovereign nation.”

Samir Hazboun, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Ohio, joined the discussions at the rally. “Socialists? Aren’t you guys supposed to be on the side of Russia?” asked Sergiy Fesenko, a former Olympic swimmer for Ukraine.

“The SWP has an unbroken history fighting to defend Lenin’s course for the

right to self-determination for oppressed nations and against the ‘Great Russian chauvinism’ of the czars and of Stalin,” Hazboun said. He described how Stalin destroyed the voluntary federation of Soviet republics that existed in Lenin’s time. Fesenko wasn’t convinced, but he subscribed to the *Militant* and purchased a copy of *Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity*.

On March 5 Hazboun addressed a crowd of 300 protesting Moscow’s invasion in Mason, Ohio.

‘My world turned upside down’

At a protest of 1,000 in London March 5, members of the Communist League attracted a lot of interest in the *Militant* and a display of revolutionary literature.

“Three weeks ago I supported Putin. My world has been turned upside down,” Iryna Usenko, a young woman originally from Ukraine, told CL member Jonathan Silberman. She signed up for a *Militant* subscription and purchased *Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity*.

“I knew nothing about what you’ve told me about the course of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution, or about the Cuban Revolution’s internationalism,” Mathew Parsons, a young photographer, told Silberman. “I need more.” He also got a *Militant* subscription.

In Toronto a dozen Communist League members and supporters joined several thousands protesting in front of the Russian Consulate March 6, reports Katy LeRougetel.

Office worker Tetiana Burdyna, originally from western Ukraine, said she was in touch with relatives back home and a friend who is part of the volunteer

Truckers demand end to gov’t mandates, attacks on livelihood

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their livelihood — soaring diesel prices, wage theft, and mandatory federal monitors in truck cabs that restrict driving hours, and more.

The convoy was inspired by Canadian truckers and other participants in protests in Ottawa, that country’s capital, demanding an end to government vaccine mandates that bar truckers from making trips to and from the U.S. The Liberal government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau responded by invoking the draconian Emergencies Act, breaking up their protests, carrying out hundreds of arrests, seizing truckers’ rigs and bank accounts, and other violations of basic political rights.

Peaceful protest

The protest here has been entirely peaceful. Organizers have not taken the convoy into the District in order to avoid provocation or government attacks. Regardless, area authorities have mobilized as if a war was brewing. D.C. cops have mobilized their Civil Disturbance Unit. President Joe Biden — who claims to be a “friend” of working people — had Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin grant requests from local cops to deploy 700 National Guard troops. Cops from New York City have come to town.

The liberal media here, like in the case of the truckers’ convoy in Canada last month, have smeared the protesters as ultra reactionary and dangerous. The *Washington Post* is full of quotes from “extremism researchers” who call convoy participants “anti-government



Militant/Josefina Otero

Dvhonte Jackson, right, discusses Ukraine war, challenges facing truckers with SWP member Dennis Richter in Hurst, Texas. Jackson got a *Militant* subscription, three Pathfinder books.

forces fighting in Chernihiv, north of Kyiv. “They say demonstrations and rallies like this one help,” she said. “They also need help from governments — they need weapons.”

When LeRougetel asked her what she thought needed to be done, Burdyna replied, “It won’t help to call for a no-fly zone. That will involve more countries in war.” As the discussion continued, she added, “I agree with you that the governments in Canada and the U.S. just want to make their own power base when they intervene somewhere. But if the Russians keep on, they will get an empty country or a constant fight.”

When Felicity Coggan and Janet Roth, members of the Communist League in New Zealand, knocked on the door of Alofaaga Taiki, they got an immediate response, March 5. “We don’t need this war. Putin shouldn’t be shooting down

people,” Taiki said. She worked as a sewing-machine operator but now stays at home taking care of her family.

“Capitalism is run by wealthy owners of the factories,” Roth said. “They are always searching for ways to make more profits, including by trying to exploit other countries.”

Coggan pointed to the triumph of the socialist revolution in Cuba and the transformation of workers and farmers there. “You can see this with the willingness of Cuban medical workers to travel anywhere to assist in fighting diseases,” she said.

“They have a heart for humanity, not just in one country but anywhere in the world,” Taiki responded. She subscribed to the *Militant*.

The SWP’s statement can be downloaded at www.themilitant.com. To join campaigning with the SWP, contact the nearest branch listed on page 8.

and “right wing conspiracy theorists.” They’re slandered as having “connections” with “January 6 insurrectionists.”

“Everybody is welcome. This is not a right-wing movement,” Lee Schmitt, a northern Wisconsin owner-operator and former dairy farmer, told the SWP team. Schmitt also participated in a three-week national action in Washington, D.C., in 2020 that called attention to owner-operators’ demands for an end to restrictions on their livelihood and protested brokers slashing their rates.

“Those demands are still important. But so is speaking out because government regulations are diminishing our freedoms,” Schmitt told us, explaining participants seek an end to the national emergency declaration in response to the pandemic — first issued by President Donald Trump in March 2020 and later extended by President Biden — and for Congress to hold hearings investigating the government’s overreaching response to the pandemic. “The Democrats and the Republicans are both to blame,” Schmitt said.

“We are living in a world the like of which none of us have known before in our lives,” I said, explaining I am a leader of the SWP in Washington and the party’s candidate for delegate to U.S. Congress. “Rising prices — gas, food and other necessities are wreaking havoc on the lives of millions. Growing social crises affect our families. A war in Europe has exploded. We need activities like this to be able to discuss a road forward for the working class.”

“I’m glad I came here to learn what

you are trying to accomplish. Your peaceful protest is being vilified in the press. Now, I can explain better why the unions need to be part of this fight,” party member Glova Scott told Schmitt.

Schmitt, who first saw the *Militant* at the 2020 truckers’ protest, signed up for a subscription. “This is a very good paper,” Schmitt told Joyce Rice, a participant from Bells, Tennessee, where she hauls tractor trailers in need of repair. She also subscribed.

“I didn’t agree with everything in Canada, but truckers took a stand. It was powerful, and it gave U.S. truckers pride and motivation,” Fred Bowerman told the *Militant*. Bowerman, a former trucker who works at the Jeep plant in Toledo, Ohio, and is a member of United Auto Workers Local 12 there, took time off to make the over 2,500 mile trip with the convoy that began in Adelanto, California. “The outpouring of support along the way has made this a once in a lifetime experience. But you also realize, we need discipline and leadership.”

Craig Brown, a trucker from Idaho who joined the convoy in California, told the *Washington Post* that the trip has been more exciting than he could have imagined. Everywhere they’ve gone, he said, people have turned out to cheer them on and brought food for them to eat.

The convoy clearly touched a nerve for working people who feel the U.S. rulers and their politicians have little concern for the challenges workers face from the economic, political and moral crisis of the capitalist system today.

Debt crisis in Argentina comes down hard on working people

BY RÓGER CALERO
AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

A deal between the government of Argentine President Alberto Fernández and the International Monetary Fund to refinance \$44.5 billion in debt owed to wealthy bondholders awaits the approval of the country's legislature. If adopted, the unending cycle of paying off part of the staggering foreign debt with yet more loans will start again, making another default inevitable down the line, with ruinous consequences for working people.

The government was expected to pay the IMF \$19 billion this year and a similar amount next year on a \$57 billion three-year bailout loan granted in 2018. The latest deal would be the 22nd such arrangement in the country's history.

Fernández claimed Jan. 28 the agreement "will allow us to grow and meet our obligations through growth."

A new postponement of debt payments will not bring capitalist growth and stability in Argentina — much less relief for working people. Over decades, every loan "restructuring" move by finance capital has only reinforced debt slavery, making the economy of Argentina and other semicolonial nations ever more dependent on the imperialist powers. The purpose of such "relief" measures is simply to make sure the debt repayments, with interest, don't stop filling the imperialist coffers.

Argentina's debt to imperialist banks and financial institutions is now \$323 billion. That vast amount approaches what the foreign debt was for *all* of Latin America in the mid-1980s.

One of the IMF's requirements for the deal is that Buenos Aires cut spending on programs that millions of working people rely on. The agreement includes cuts to government subsidies for electric and gas rates and public transportation.

As part of the deal, Argentina's central bank raised its interest rates Feb. 17. That will mean steeper payments on individual mortgages, credit cards, and car loans, and an even higher overall household debt. All this as working people face the scourge of rising prices.

Workers face acute conditions

The official unemployment rate is more than 10%, and inflation has been running above 50% a year, dealing blows to workers' real wages. Today, in a country of 45 million people, 10 million rely on food assistance.

The effects of a recession that began in 2018 were aggravated by the COVID-related lockdowns, which left millions without jobs and income for much of the past two years.

People are concerned "not about eating well, but about simply having enough to eat," Dina Sánchez, spokesperson of the Darío Santillán Popular Front, told the *Global Press Journal* in August.

Her organization runs soup kitchens. In Villa 21-24, one of the many shantytowns that ring Buenos Aires, the city government supplies the group's kitchen with food to feed 160 people a day. But over the course of the lockdowns demand has skyrocketed, and they've have had to "do magic" to try to stretch the food to serve nearly 500 meals daily, Sánchez said.

Despite enduring one of the world's longest and harshest lockdowns, Argentina has had 2,765 COVID-related deaths per 1 million inhabitants.

The government's measures did not change the underlying social causes of the pandemic's devastating impact — from lack of drinking water, reliable electric service and decent housing in many working-class neighborhoods to child malnutrition, which affects about 40% of the country's children.

Many workers faced the bitter choice of either buying internet data so their children could attend "virtual schooling" or feeding their family. "We had to start going to a food pantry because we couldn't afford to pay for it and continue buying food," Romina Cejas, an unemployed housekeeper and babysitter, told *Global Press*.

On Feb. 16, nurses hired on a temporary basis at hospitals and vaccination centers marched in Buenos Aires to demand they be hired permanently, as the end of their employment contracts neared. In response, the city government announced a "contest" to keep 1,200 of the 3,800 nurses. Protesters noted that hospitals were already short 5,000 nurses before the pandemic.

Peronist government crisis

Pressure to meet demands of the imperialist creditors by imposing more belt-tightening measures on broad layers of the population is fracturing the governing Frente de Todos (Front for Everyone) coalition, made up of the different factions of the Peronist party and middle-class radical organizations.

The coalition was dealt a setback



Teachers in Jujuy, northern Argentina, are fighting for wage raise to keep up with skyrocketing price increases. Sign says, "No to the miserable 19% increase," referring to the government's offer. They went on strike March 1 to demand increase to match Argentina's 50% inflation.

in November parliamentary elections, losing control of the Senate to a coalition of center-right parties.

Now, vice president — and former president — Cristina Fernández de Kirchner has threatened to lead a vote against the IMF package if "better terms" are not reached, seeking to distance herself from the president.

Since the end of World War II, when former Col. Juan Domingo Perón came to power, the Peronist party has been the political mainstay of capitalist rule in Argentina. While claiming to champion the interests of working people, it has served to subordinate workers' interests to the bosses, tie the union movement to the state, and act as a brake on working-class struggles.

The government of Néstor Kirchner furthered this course between 2003 and 2007 by co-opting practically the

entire middle-class left into government posts and programs. This has continued today. Leaders of left-wing groups, including those who took over unemployed workers' organizations that emerged during the crisis of the 1990s, are now in charge of a multitude of government-funded services and co-operatives. The orientation of all these groups, from the Communist Party to various Trotskyist formations, is to get elected to government office.

The acute economic and social crisis, however, has increasingly discredited the Peronist-led government among broad layers of working people. While there are no big labor struggles today, skirmishes continue to break out, from shipyard workers in La Plata fighting for back pay to construction workers in Córdoba striking for health care and pension benefits.

Amazon workers in Alabama rally for pro-union vote

BY SUSAN LAMONT

BESSEMER, Ala. — "It's an atrocity that we, the laborers, generate 99% of the income, yet we get less than 1% of the cut," Amazon worker Dale Wyatt told 150 unionists and others here Feb. 26. They had turned out to show solidarity with workers fighting for a union at the nearby Amazon fulfillment center. "I come here to say that now is the time for working people to stand together against the megarich, to make things better not only for ourselves, but for future generations to come."

Over 6,100 Amazon warehouse workers here are in the midst of a second vote to decide whether they can win union recognition by the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Workers Union.

The rally drew groups of unionists from around Alabama, including some 15 members of the United Mine Workers, who represented the 1,100 miners waging a hard-fought strike at Warrior Met Coal in nearby Brookwood. That strike entered its 12th month March 1.

"The battle at Amazon needs to be won," United Mine Workers International District 20 Vice President Larry Spencer told the crowd. "We hope every worker votes 'yes' for the union!"

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler also brought greetings to the rally.

Representatives from the United Steelworkers and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the RWD-SU, and a group of nearly 20 Georgia unionists brought by the Atlanta Central Labor Council also participated.

A small group of workers from the nonunion Hyundai auto assembly plant in Montgomery came with handmade signs to show support and to tell fellow workers about their own situation.

"We need a union at Hyundai," said Dee, who asked that her last name not be used. "I've worked at Hyundai for 17 years. We work for slave wages and in slave-like working conditions. It's time for a change!"

Several NAACP members from Athens, Alabama, also attended, including Leon Steele. "The NAACP has always supported labor and workers' rights," he said, recalling he was fired from a ConAgra plant in 1975 for participating in a union-organizing drive.

Several Amazon workers told the *Militant* the organizing drive is stronger this time than in the fall of 2020. Union volunteers are holding house meetings with Amazon workers to answer ques-

tions and seek their involvement, and helping workers be more outspoken at the "captive audience" in-house anti-union meetings Amazon forces workers to attend. Union supporters are also going into local neighborhoods to explain the stakes in the union drive.

The National Labor Relations Board approved this second election earlier this year, after finding that the notoriously anti-union Amazon bosses had intimidated workers and corrupted the 2021 vote. Voting, which ends March 28, is now underway by mail-in ballot.

The RWDSU lost the first election last April by a more than a 2-to-1 margin, with 738 votes for the union, 1,798 against, and 2,759 not voting. Nearly half of the workers at the warehouse have been hired since the first union vote.

Lisa Potash and Valerie Edwards contributed to this article.

Socialist Workers Party statement

Defend Ukraine's independence!

For defeat of Moscow's invasion!

US troops, nuclear arms out of Europe, all of Europe!

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themilitant.com



—ON THE PICKET LINE—

‘We are fighting for those to come,’ Quebec co-op strikers say

JOLIETTE, Quebec — Some 30 workers at the Novago Cooperative here are approaching their sixth month on strike, fighting against the bosses’ demands for pay cuts of 14% to 29%; cuts in sick days, vacation days and paid holidays; unstable work schedules; and for management to be able to hire nonunion workers to do work previously done by union people. They have been on strike since Sept. 30.

Novago was formed in 2018 by the fusion of four smaller cooperatives. It has 400 employees at different locations, providing farmers with agricultural and technical advice services, sales of agricultural products and hardware sales and other services throughout Quebec.

“In the midst of a labor shortage, the employer wants to impose a drastic reduction of \$22 to \$15 per hour for certain employees, which could push many of us to simply quit our jobs,” said Nicole Lambert, president of the Syndicat des travailleurs et travailleuses de la Coop Lanaudiere CSN. Some of these workers, like Lambert, have been working at the cooperative for decades.

When this worker-correspondent joined the strike line on Feb. 22, pickets included some with high seniority and others with just two or three years.

The bosses have used intimidation tactics, including closing down of the BMR hardware store that was part of the cooperative Feb. 15, where five union members had worked.

“When they say it wasn’t profitable anymore, we don’t believe them. In a meeting of the members a few days before the shutdown, they said that the retail sector was doing fine,” Lambert told the *Militant*.

The company has been using scabs to do union clerical work. “With remote work it’s harder to identify the scabs. The anti-scab law isn’t adapted to the current situation anymore,” Lambert said, referring to a 1977 law that was won by Quebec workers through a series of hard-fought strikes.

The Novago workers have received solidarity from a number of unions. On

Feb. 22, a busload of CSN-organized workers from the Firestone tire plant in Joliette marched on the picket line. Solidarity has also come from Krueger paper workers and striking Hilton hotel workers from Quebec City.

Both Novago and Hilton Quebec City strikers organized a joint demonstration Feb. 17 in front of the cooperative offices and the BMR hardware outlet in Joliette.

“It warms our heart, even when it’s only two or three people. It pushes us to keep going, even under these hard conditions,” Lambert said. “Our fight isn’t personal, we do it because we must. You have to look back at those that fought for us in the past. They fought so we could have good working conditions, so we have to do the same for those to come.”

At the present time, no negotiations are taking place. The Quebec City Hilton strikers face a similar situation.

Solidarity messages for the Novago strikers can be sent to sttcooplanaudiere@gmail.com.

— Franklin Victor Antonelli

New Zealand CHEP pallet workers strike wins gains

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Workers at the CHEP pallet company’s service center here celebrated March 4 after voting unanimously to accept a new contract following a two-week strike. The FIRST Union members had kept up a round-the-clock picket line, successfully turning back many trucks from entering the plant.

Most workers will get a raise, earning at least 22.75 New Zealand dollars (\$15.53) an hour, a NZ\$2.75 increase over the old starting rate. Overtime rates

Haiti garment workers strike for higher wages



Reuters/Ralph Tedy Erol

Thousands of garment and other workers, above, took to the streets of Port-au-Prince, Haiti’s capital, Feb. 17 demanding higher wages. Police fired into a Feb. 23 protest after the workers went on strike. Maxihien Lazzare, a reporter for Roi des Infos, was killed and five workers were injured.

It was the first day of a three-day strike by factory workers demanding a pay raise. Wages have been about 500 gourdes (\$4.80) for a nine hours’ workday. The action followed weeks of protests over pay and working conditions at factories that export to U.S. retailers. There has been double-digit inflation in the country for the last four years. Strikers said salaries haven’t been raised in three years. The government’s offer of a 185 gourdes increase only enraged strikers.

“People can’t do anything with this miserable salary,” said Jean Wilkens Pierre. The 39-year-old worker said it barely covers food and transportation. Dominique St. Eloi, a coordinator for the National Union of Haitian Workers, said the strikers are demanding a daily minimum of 1,500 gourdes.

More than 53,000 people work in Haiti’s garment factories, which account for three-quarters of Haiti’s exports. At least 62 U.S.-owned companies have factories there, making clothes for Target, Under Armour, Hanes and others.

— VIVIAN SAHNER

will be time and a half for Saturday work and double for Sunday. The contract included a NZ\$500 signing bonus and further pay raises later this year.

Union Secretary Mark Muller said on

Facebook that it had taken “guts and resolve” for the workers to go out on strike, attributing their victory to “solidarity and this kind of firm commitment.”

— Felicity Coggan

Striking Machinists reject takeback offers, win support

Continued from front page

is a so-called right-to-work state, unions are barred from negotiating as a closed shop. Some nonunion workers walked out and are helping staff the picket lines.

The company is demanding higher costs for health care, elimination of overtime pay after eight hours, forced overtime, attacks on pensions, and wage increases below inflation.

“The new proposal is the same contract we voted down before we began the strike, with the exception that it’s for five years instead of three,” striker John Fox told the *Militant* by phone March 7. “Why would I vote down a contract that includes cutbacks in the pension plan plus cutbacks in the 401(k) for three years and then vote for the same cutbacks for five years?”

“If Eaton’s belief was that support within the two bargaining units is waning after two weeks on the strike line, this vote outcome should answer that question,” John Herrig, IAM District 6 business representative, told the press.

The company announced it would begin hiring replacement workers and wouldn’t be available to meet with the union again until March 14 or later.

“The strike brought us together,” said striker Tony Johnson on the picket line March 3. “We have UAW workers from John Deere every day and other unions have joined us. Our picket lines remain strong.” Over 6,000 United Auto Workers at John Deere in the Quad Cities area here went out on strike last fall.

“The company cut off our health insurance,” assembler Susan Brew told the *Militant*. Maintenance worker Glen Carr said, “The company has hired Hometown Plumbing to do some of the work we usually do.”

Some salaried workers have begun leaving the company, citing unsafe conditions in the plant without the union workers and in solidarity with their fight. “Several of them have stopped by the strike line to say their ‘goodbyes,’” the union told the media.

“It’s sad to see some good people from the salaried side leave because of conditions inside,” James Anderson, shop chair for Local 1191’s bargaining unit, told WQAD news. “I certainly hope that we can reach an agreement that is competitive with the cost of living instead of Eaton’s lowest-paid facilities.”

To join the strikers’ picket line or offer support to their fight, call IAM Local 388 at (563) 383-6289.

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



March 24, 1997

HAVANA — More than 130 people from 55 countries met here for the Second International Coordinating Committee meeting for the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students.

The festival, which will be held in Cuba July 28-August 5, will discuss and debate a range of political questions confronting the working class, including: anti-imperialist struggles, the environment, the fight for women’s liberation, national liberation struggles, employment, education, labor resistance, and how to fight against fascism.

The meeting reaffirmed the slogan of “Anti-imperialist solidarity, peace and friendship” as the theme of the event.

Preparatory committees have formed in over 40 countries so far. The U.S. Organizing Committee is holding a national preparatory meeting March 15 that will discuss the organizing efforts for the U.S. delegation.



March 24, 1972

The reverberations of the Bangladesh national liberation struggle continue to shake both India and Pakistan as other oppressed nationalities demand their national rights. The most significant motion is among the Pathans of Pakistan. Occupying the Baluchistan and North-West Frontier provinces, the Pathans are excluded from many areas of Pakistani life by the dominant Punjabi minority.

Pathan complaints include demands for language rights — the Pathans speak Pushtu, while most official business is done in Urdu, a tongue spoken by a small minority.

On Feb. 27 an armed demonstration was held in Peshawar, calling for the end of martial law and for Pathan self-government within Pakistan. The Pathans are traditionally a military people and even in normal times highly armed with modern weapons made in small factories in their country.



March 22, 1947

Wall Street’s offensive against the American working class is part and parcel of U.S. imperialism’s intensified drive toward war and subjugation of the rest of the world. [President] Truman’s proclamation of economic and military intervention against the Greek people has brought with it the immediate threat of further militarization, regimentation and repression at home.

This need to regiment the workers for war and to foist on them new onerous economic burdens dictates the need of American capitalism to cripple the labor movement. The standard of living of the masses must be driven down further to feed the war machine.

Wall Street’s war against the revolutionary peoples of other countries who are fighting capitalist reaction, is being waged simultaneously against any attempts of the American workers to break the rule of monopoly capital.

Ivan Dzyuba, Marxist fighter for the sovereignty of Ukraine

BY SETH GALINSKY

Ivan Dzyuba died Feb. 22 at the age of 90, ironically on the eve of Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine. Dzyuba was a literary critic and Marxist who was jailed by the then-Stalinist Soviet government of Ukraine in 1973 for his defense of political rights and of V.I. Lenin’s views on the right of Ukraine and other oppressed nations to self-determination. Lenin was the central leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution that overthrew the czarist regime in Russia.

“I have always endeavored to consider nationality problems — just as, in fact, all other problems — from the viewpoint of the principles of scientific Communism and of the teaching of Marx, Engels and Lenin,” Dzyuba said in 1969 when he published his book *Internationalism or Russification?* “perceiving the prospects for their successful solutions to lie along the road towards the fulfillment of Lenin’s legacy and Communist construction.”

Dzyuba was born in 1931 in the Donbas coal-mining region of eastern Ukraine, which is currently under the control of Moscow-backed separatist gangs. By 1962 he was a well-known writer and head of literary criticism at *Vitchyzna* magazine, but was removed, accused of “ideological mistakes.”

Crimes of Stalin

By that time he had joined with others fighting to recover the cultural and literary heritage of Ukraine, as part of a growing anti-Stalinist revolutionary movement in Ukraine and across Russia. This came on the heels of Communist Party leader Nikita Khrushchev’s 1956 revelations of the tip of the iceberg of Joseph Stalin’s crimes in power, as well as the powerful working-class rebellion in Hungary that year.

Layers of working people, writers and artists in the Soviet Union, including Ukraine, were chafing at the oppressive policies and actions of the bureaucracy that came to power in the Stalinist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union after Lenin’s death.

On Sept. 4, 1965, at the premiere of “Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors,” a film that broke with the Stalinist-imposed historiography of Ukraine, Dzyuba, Vyacheslav Chronovil and Vasyly Stus spoke to a packed theater. They denounced the arrests earlier that year of more than 100 young people and “intellectuals” across the country for their anti-Stalinist political views.

That December Dzyuba wrote to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine and the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic to call for an end to the “most frightful injustice” of this political persecution.

Dzyuba wrote, “It is no secret that during recent years a growing number of people in the Ukraine, especially among the younger generation (not only students, scientists and creative writers and artists, but also now quite often, workers), have been coming to the conclusion that there is something amiss with the nationalities policy in the Ukraine.” In fact, he said, the people of Ukraine face “perpetual, flagrant violations of Marxism-Leninism

on the nationalities question, and the abandonment of scientific principles in communist national construction.”

To further an open discussion and debate on these questions he sent them the manuscript of his book *Internationalism or Russification?* later published in Russian, English and Ukrainian editions.

That book — distributed in English at the time by Pathfinder Press — is a cogent explanation of Lenin’s view of the necessity for communists to support the right of oppressed nations in the Soviet Union and elsewhere to self-determination, including independence if they so choose.

Dzyuba describes the flowering of culture in Ukraine during the early years of the Bolshevik Revolution under Lenin’s leadership. He notes that “the Ukrainian language was introduced into all spheres of social, civic and industrial life, knowledge of Ukrainian history and culture was fostered; there developed a sense of national belonging and of the national duties of a Ukrainian communist.”

He described how the bloody Stalinist counterrevolution overturned the gains made by the Bolshevik Revolution in relation to Ukraine and other nations.

Standing up to Jew-hatred

Dzyuba also played a key role in speaking out against antisemitism. On Sept. 29, 1966, he joined a spontaneous action of thousands at Babyn Yar



Ivan Dzyuba speaks in Kyiv at 1965 premiere of famed film, “Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors.” It celebrated Ukrainian culture, in sharp break with Stalinist orthodoxy. Dzyuba spoke out against arrests of over 100 youth and intellectuals for their anti-Stalinist views and activity.

in defiance of Stalinist authorities to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the beginning of the Nazi massacre of 100,000 Jews and tens of thousands of others in that ravine in Kyiv.

When participants realized that Dzyuba and other writers were there, they demanded they speak. “Babyn Yar is a tragedy of all mankind but it happened on Ukrainian soil. And therefore, a Ukrainian has no right to forget it anymore than a Jew,” Dzyuba told the crowd. “It seems that Lenin’s instructions concerning the struggle against antisemitism are forgotten in the same way as his precepts regarding national development of the Ukraine.”

In 1972 Dzyuba was expelled from the Writers’ Union, arrested and sentenced to prison. After 18 months in jail he signed a statement saying his

writings were the work of a “mistaken man,” and appealed for clemency, which he was granted. He was able to get work as a proofreader of the factory newspaper at the Kyiv Aviation Plant. After getting out of jail Dzyuba was less politically active, focusing more on literary projects. But after the implosion of the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union in 1991, he became minister of culture of an independent Ukraine from 1992 to 1994. He wrote a preface in 2018 to a forthcoming translation into Ukrainian of *Capital* by Karl Marx.

In the last chapter of *Internationalism or Russification?* Dzyuba wrote that Stalin “destroyed several million Ukrainians but did not destroy the nation. And no one ever will.” Words that remain true to this day.

The book is well worth reading today.

Cuban unions set mass May Day march, solidarity conference

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) is inviting workers around the world to the million-strong May Day parade in Havana — which celebrates International Workers Day and puts on display the determination of Cuban workers to defend their socialist revolution. The huge parade had been suspended the last two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The call, issued by the CTC and Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), includes a series of activities from April 30 to May 2 for international delegations to take part alongside Cuban workers.

Since November Cuba has made tremendous progress in returning to “normality.” It reopened its borders and schools and restarted suspended economic activities. Cuba is number two in the world in vaccinations to protect against COVID-19. Nearly 90% of the population is fully vaccinated with one of five highly effective vaccines developed and produced there.

Cuba’s exemplary success in overcoming the virus took place despite the brutal intensification of the U.S. economic war on Cuba under the administrations of Donald Trump and Joseph Biden. The U.S. rulers have never forgiven the people of Cuba for overthrowing the U.S.-backed dictatorial regime of Fulgencio Batista in 1959, and replacing it with a government of workers and farmers. Under the leadership of Fidel Castro, they showed toilers around the world that a socialist revolution is both possible and necessary.

The theme of this year’s events is “United, those who love and create.” A key aspect of the activities is to demand the lifting of the criminal economic, commercial and financial embargo of Cuba that has been maintained by Washington — every Democratic and Republican administration alike — for more than 60 years.

Events this year will include visits and community gatherings across Havana and a conference of international solidarity with Cuba the day after.

Ulises Guilarte, general secretary of the CTC, met with representatives of building-trades unions from France, Panama, Belgium and the Philippines visiting Cuba March 3 to invite them



Juvenal Balán

Huge march in Havana May 1, 2018. May Day parade this year will be first for two years, followed by conference of international solidarity with Cuba organized by Cuban Confederation of Unions. The activities follow the Havana International Book Fair, April 20-30.

and other unions worldwide to send delegations. Among the trade unionists at the meeting were Ambet Yuson, general secretary of the Building and Wood Workers’ International union federation, and Bruno Bothua, secretary general of the General Confedera-

tion of Labor in France, who joined in denouncing the U.S. embargo.

International guests can help by denouncing the “extraterritorial” character of the U.S. economic war, the CTC call says, “which is the main obstacle to the country’s economic and social develop-

Defeat Moscow’s war on Ukrainian independence!

Continued from front page soldiers fired into the air to try to scare them away.

In nearby Nova Kakhovka, Russian forces opened fire on an anti-occupation protest of 2,000, injuring at least five.

Days after invading forces seized the mostly Russian-speaking city Melitopol, thousands of residents protested the occupation, waving Ukrainian flags and chanting at Russian soldiers, “Go home! Go home!” Despite a ban on demonstrations, protests have been held there daily since and are growing in size. Residents approach Russian soldiers and ask them what they are doing in Melitopol and challenge Putin’s pretexts for his military invasion.

“The Socialist Workers Party hails their resistance and calls for the defeat of Putin’s invading forces,” Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes said in a March 3 public statement on behalf of the party’s National Committee. It is available on the *Militant* website.

Protests in Russia against the war

At a March 5 rally in New York, Sasha Nazintseva, 28, held a sign indicating she was Russian and opposed Putin’s war. Her family is in Russia and she told the *Militant* many Russians are against the invasion, but were “intimidated from protesting by Putin’s new laws.” Penalties include up to 15 years’ imprisonment for spreading “fake news” about the war.

“But things are escalating very quickly,” she said.

Chanting “No to war!” tens of thousands rallied in 147 cities across Russia the next day. More than 5,000 people were detained and many beaten. Since the invasion almost 13,500 protesters have been arrested. Some 12,000 Russian health care workers signed a letter to Putin calling for an end to the war.

A March 6 video shows Sergei Tsiviliev, the pro-Putin governor of southwest

Siberia’s Kuzbass region, confronted by an angry crowd of soldiers’ mothers. He urged the women not to criticize until the war “ends, which it will soon.”

A woman retorted, “When everyone dies!”

“Why did they send our boys there?” a woman can be heard asking Tsiviliev. “They were sent as cannon fodder,” one responds, while another says authorities “lied to everyone.”

Moscow’s invading troops are mainly conscripts and disproportionately from rural areas of Russia or non-Russian.

Putin threatened March 3 that his artillery and missile bombardment of urban areas would “get worse if the Ukrainians do not accept surrender terms.” He demands recognition of the Kremlin’s 2014 seizure of the Crimean Peninsula and areas in eastern Ukraine that were captured by pro-Moscow separatist groups.

Kyiv and Kharkiv, the two largest Ukrainian cities, have been besieged by Moscow with indiscriminate shelling since ground assaults failed to lead to their rapid capture. People in Kharkiv, Mariupol and elsewhere are hiding in underground shelters, without heating, water or electricity, as Ukrainian forces hold Russian troops off. Food and medicines are running out.

Mariupol is a special target since Ukrainian government forces defeated an attempted takeover by pro-Moscow separatists there in 2014, following the popular Maidan uprising that toppled the pro-Moscow regime of President Viktor Yanukovich.

By March 9 over 2 million people, mainly women, babies and children as well as the elderly, had fled Ukraine across its western and southern borders. Of these, 1.2 million have crossed into Poland.

“But there are no border refugee camps because families are taking people in,” Zofia Lipton, a Polish American, told the *Militant* at the New York rally

ment.” Participants will have the chance to “learn about the Cuban reality and exchange ideas about conditions throughout the world” that confront working people, including the pandemic and the policies of all capitalist governments, including Washington, “that put the market ahead of the lives of human beings.”

The U.S. economic war effects every aspect of life in Cuba, from food to health care to factory production. There are shortages of fertilizer and pesticides, many medicines, and a wide variety of normal foodstuffs.

The mass activities around May Day will come on the heels of the 30th Havana International Book Fair April 20-30, which attracts hundreds of thousands of Cubans.

The Socialist Workers Party and Pathfinder Press are organizing an international team to participate in both events. They will be presenting Pathfinder’s two newest titles, *The Jewish Question* by Belgian Marxist Abram Leon, who died in a Nazi concentration camp in 1944, and *Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity: The Long View of History* by Frederick Engels, Karl Marx, George Novack and SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

March 5. Her mother told her that “in the streets of Warsaw, you hear more and more Russian spoken,” the common language that many Poles and Ukrainians use to talk with each other.

No-fly zone?

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky’s call for Washington to impose a “no-fly zone” over Ukraine was echoed by some at solidarity rallies in cities in the U.S. and elsewhere. The administration of President Joseph Biden says it will not do so.

No-fly zones were imposed by the U.S. rulers and allied air forces in the 1990s over Iraq just after the first Iraq war. The intervention was used by Washington to unleash deadly assaults, weaken the Saddam Hussein regime’s air defenses, and pave the way for the second Iraq war in 2003.

Putin warned that he would view any acts by governments to police such a zone as “participation in the armed conflict.”

Expanding sanctions targeting Russia by Washington and other imperialist powers have been reinforced by a ban on Russian energy imports imposed by both Washington and London March 8. In reality these measures hit working people in Russia, already facing years of worsening conditions of life and work, complicating efforts to mobilize opposition there to Moscow’s war.

“The Socialist Workers Party opposes the broadly aimed economic and financial embargo imposed on Russia by the U.S., European, and other imperialist ruling classes, as well as military maneuvers by these governments,” the SWP statement explains.

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Stalinism bears main responsibility for Hitler’s rise to power

The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany by Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky is this week’s Books of the Month selection. Written during the heat of battle against the rising Nazi movement in the early 1930s, he explains the counterrevolutionary course of the Stalinized Communist Party, which split the workers’ movement enabling Hitler to come to power without firing a shot. Trotsky insistently called for a united front and defense guards by workers on the road to power by the working class and its allies. The excerpt is from his March 14, 1933, article, “The Tragedy of the German Proletariat — The German Workers Will Rise Again — Stalinism, Never!” Copyright © 1971 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Nazi stormtroopers occupy union offices in Berlin 1933. Stalinist line that Social Democrats were “social fascists,” refusal to collaborate with them in fight against Hitler, allowed fascists to come to power without facing serious working-class combat.

Deutsches Historisches Museum

cial historic positions are surrendered without a fight. A false political theory bears within itself its own punishment. The strength and the obstinacy of the apparatus only augment the dimensions of the catastrophe.

Having surrendered to the enemy everything that could be surrendered in such a short space of time, the Stalinists are trying to rectify the past by means of convulsive acts, which only more brightly illu-

minate the whole chain of crimes committed by them. Now that the press of the Communist Party is stifled, now the apparatus is destroyed, now the bloody pennant of fascism waves with impunity over the Karl Liebknecht House, the Executive Committee of the Comintern is starting out on the road of the united front not only from below but also from above. The new zigzag, sharper than all that preceded it, has not, however, been effected on the impulse of the ECCI itself; the Stalinist bureaucracy has abandoned the initiative to the Second International. ...

In a special appeal of the ECCI on March 5, “To the Workers of All Countries,” the Stalinists do not say a word about social fascism as the main enemy. They no longer speak about the great discovery of their leader: “The Social Democracy and fascism are not antipodes but twins.” They no longer insist on saying that the struggle against fascism demands *as a preliminary* the defeat of the Social Democracy. They do not breathe a word about the inadmissibility of the united front from above. On the contrary, they carefully enumerate those cases in the past where the Stalinist bureaucracy, unexpectedly for the workers and for itself, found itself forced to improvise proposals for the united front to the reformist summits. Thus do artificial, false, and charlatanesque theories founder in the fury of the historical tempest. ...

The German proletariat will rise again, Stalinism — never. Under the terrible blows of the enemy, the advanced German workers will have to build up a new party. The Bolshevik-Leninists will give all their forces to this work.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

The most powerful proletariat of Europe, measured by its place in production, its social weight, and the strength of its organizations, has manifested no resistance since Hitler’s coming to power and his first violent attacks against the workers’ organizations. This is the fact

from which to proceed in subsequent strategic calculations. ...

Before *decisive* battles will become possible, the proletarian vanguard will have to reorient itself; that is to say, it will have to understand what has happened, assign the responsibility for the great historical defeat, trace out the new road, and thus regain confidence in itself.

The criminal role of the Social Democracy requires no commentary: the Comintern was created fourteen years ago precisely in order to snatch the proletariat from the demoralizing influence of the Social Democracy. If it has not succeeded up to now, if the German proletariat found itself impotent, disarmed, and paralyzed at the moment of its greatest historic test, the direct and immediate blame falls upon the leadership of the post-Leninist Comintern. That is the first conclusion which ought to be drawn immediately. ...

Since 1923 ... the Stalinist leadership, although indirectly, assisted the Social Democracy with all its strength to derail, to befuddle, to enfeeble the German proletariat: it restrained and hindered the workers when the conditions dictated a courageous revolutionary offensive; it proclaimed the approach of the revolutionary situation when it had already passed; it worked up agreements with petty-bourgeois phrasemongers and windbags; it limped impotently at the tail of the Social Democracy under cover of the policy of the united front; it proclaimed the “third period” and the struggle for the conquest of the streets under conditions of political ebb and the weakness of the Communist Party; it replaced the serious struggle by leaps, ad-

ventures or parades; it isolated the Communists from the mass trade unions; it identified the Social Democracy with fascism and rejected the united front with the mass workers’ organizations in face of the aggressive bands of the National Socialists; it sabotaged the slightest initiative for the united front for local defense, at the same time it systematically deceived the workers as to the real relationship of forces, distorted the facts, passed off friends as enemies and enemies as friends — and drew the noose tighter and tighter around the neck of the party, not permitting it to breathe freely any longer, nor to speak, nor to think.

Out of the vast literature devoted to the question of fascism it is enough to refer to the speech of Thaelmann, official leader of the German Communist Party, who, at the plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in April 1931, denounced the “pessimists.”... Referring to the creation of defense groups by the Social Democracy, Thaelmann demonstrated in the same speech that these groups differ in no respect from the shock troops of the National Socialists and that both of them are likewise preparing to annihilate Communism.

Today, Thaelmann is under arrest. Faced with triumphant reaction, the Bolshevik-Leninists are in the same ranks as Thaelmann. But the policy of Thaelmann is the policy of Stalin, that is, the official policy of the Comintern. It is precisely this policy which is the cause of the complete demoralization of the party at the moment of danger, when the leaders lose their heads, when the party members, unaccustomed to thinking, fall prostrate, when the prin-

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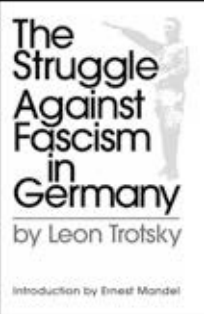
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Class-struggle road to end war in Ukraine

Angered at the death and destruction raining down on the people of Ukraine by Moscow, and inspired by the ferocious resistance of the Ukrainian people, many protesters support calls for the U.S. rulers to impose ever-tightening sanctions and no-fly zones.

But regardless of their crocodile tears, the U.S. capitalist rulers and their government aren't motivated by the fight of the Ukrainian people for sovereignty. Everything they do abroad is aimed at advancing their class interests in a ceaseless conflict with rivals for markets and political domination. U.S. government foreign policy — under Democrats and Republicans — is an extension of the bosses' insatiable drive for profits at home in a class struggle to drive down workers' wages, conditions and rights.

Imperialist intervention will not create better conditions for struggles against the war by workers and farmers in Ukraine, or Russia. That is not the U.S. rulers' goal. The last thing they want is to strengthen the self-confidence and power of working people.

Reviewing past struggles against imperialist war — like the fight against the U.S. rulers' war against the Vietnamese people who were fighting for national independence — is highly instructive. The courageous struggle by the Vietnamese, and the carnage inflicted both on them and on the U.S. workers sent as cannon

fodder there, fueled growing mass protests here and worldwide that won more and more workers, including those in uniform, to oppose that slaughter. At a certain point, the U.S. rulers had to back off or face a growing class struggle at home.

Punishing sanctions against Moscow, however, land hardest on workers and farmers. They're an obstacle to building the unity of working people in Ukraine and Russia, and growing collaboration against capitalist exploitation and war.

However the course of Putin's murderous war on Ukraine unfolds, as long as capitalists hold power in the U.S., Russia, or anywhere, *there will be no peace*. Their declining system, based on oppression and exploitation, will breed deeper, more violent conflicts, with a greater danger nuclear weapons will be used.

Only the working class and its allies are capable of waging a struggle to wrest power from the ruling class, disarm them, and end the threat of more wars. The Socialist Workers Party exists to educate and organize working people to carry that out. Join SWP members campaigning with the statement by Jack Barnes, the party's national secretary: "Defend Ukraine's independence! For defeat of Moscow's invasion! U.S. troops, nuclear arms out of Europe, *all* of Europe!"

Verdict for Amtrak engineer is victory for workers

BY CHRIS HOEPPNER

PHILADELPHIA — It took less than 90 minutes March 4 for a Philadelphia jury to find Brandon Bostian, the engineer during the 2015 Amtrak derailment where eight people died and more than 200 were injured, not guilty of all charges brought against him.

Amtrak had previously agreed to pay \$265 million to settle claims filed by victims and their families.

The district attorney's office in Philadelphia had

AS I SEE IT

declined to prosecute Bostian for the deadly accident. But Democratic Pennsylvania Attorney General Joshua Shapiro filed over 200 charges against the rail worker. The case had been dismissed twice.

In September 2017 Judge Thomas Gehret ruled Bostian had no criminal responsibility for the derailment, which, he said, appeared to be an accident. That didn't stop the state, which filed the same case in a different court. But in 2019 Judge Barbara McDermott made the same ruling, saying, "The law recognizes we're all human."

Shapiro appealed, and the case was sent to this third trial. Bostian's attorney, Brian McMonagle, said the former engineer had lived through seven years wondering whether he would ever get his life back. "Today this jury gave him his future back," McMonagle said after the verdict.

As a conductor on a freight railroad out of Philadelphia, I applaud the verdict. Brother Bostian had guts to refuse to break and accept the plea deal they made to him on charges of involuntary manslaughter, reckless endangerment and of causing a catastrophe. If he had been convicted he would have faced years in prison. Even when innocent, many workers take a plea "bargain" when faced with draconian sentences.

Bostian's acquittal is a victory for rail workers, our unions and all workers.

The derailment happened after Bostian was alarmed and distracted by reports over his train radio that a nearby SEPTA commuter train made an emergency stop after it was struck by rocks, shattering the windshield. That SEPTA engineer testified about that at Bostian's trial this week, as did a passenger on an Amtrak Acela train going in the opposite direction, who said a projectile struck his window moments before Bostian's train went careening off the rails.

The National Transportation Safety Board investigated the derailment and concluded Bostian lost what they call "situational awareness." Thinking he was on a long straightaway, the engineer accelerated, when the train was actually approaching a sharp curve.

An expert on train accidents testified for the defense and described several other crashes where investigators reached similar conclusions. The prosecution pressed its case, arguing Bostian was trained for just such situations as rocks being thrown at the engine.

Rail bosses, Congress cut safety

The prosecuting attorney from the attorney general's office tried to paint Bostian as a villain, while disregarding the contempt for safety shown repeatedly by Amtrak and Congress. Amtrak bosses cut engine crew size over years. Today there is only one worker on the engine for much of the time, such as in the Washington, D.C., to New York City run, and if anything happens to him no one else can step in.

At the time of the 2015 crash, Dennis Pierce, president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, and John Previsich, president of the SMART Transportation Division, pointed out in a joint statement, "Safe transportation service demand[s] a crew of at least two fully trained and qualified employees in the control cab of every train." This is as relevant today as ever.

Amtrak, like almost all major freight railroads, fought to delay installing Positive Train Control, a braking safety device that automatically slows or stops trains that exceed speed limits. At their urging, Congress continually put off deadlines for them to do so.

At the time of the crash, these protections were not installed on the track Bostian was on. They were deployed only after the deaths from this derailment made it politically impossible to avoid doing so any longer. The bosses consider safety just another cost.

Currently freight railroads include an engineer and conductor in the cab of most trains. While Positive Train Control can help ensure safer operation, it can't replace two crew members. Many rail workers have no set schedule of hours, work on call 24/7, and work 12-hour shifts or more. These schedules wreak havoc on rail workers' families. Fatigue is a major challenge.

The freight bosses are trying to eliminate the conductor. The jury verdict in Philadelphia shows that safety on the rails can't be left to the rail bosses and their backers in Congress. Two crew members in the cab of a passenger train at all times are no less necessary than on a freight train.

As I'm writing this article I hear on the news that a freight train with 20 coal cars has derailed just north of Baltimore, shutting down Amtrak from Washington, D.C., to Philadelphia. Rail workers need to use our unions to fight to take control over the working conditions we face. This is the only way to ensure safer conditions on the job, for rail passengers, and for the communities we travel through.

Biden 'State of Union'

Continued from front page

workers and farmers are sharply counterposed to the interests of the U.S. capitalist rulers. Biden made that clear, saying, "We use every tool at our disposal to protect American businesses."

For working people here, the toilers in Ukraine are our class allies, and their fight for national independence is our fight. For Biden and both main capitalist parties, the plight of Ukraine is an opportunity to find new ways to strengthen their hand for future wars over markets and profits.

While Biden made it clear that the U.S. rulers have no intention of backing Ukraine on the ground, he did say, "We have mobilized American ground forces, air squadrons, ship deployments" worldwide. This is part of significant shifts underway as all the imperialist powers reassess their military and take steps to better prepare to defend their national interests.

As they gear up for coming wars abroad, U.S. bosses and their government are fighting to extract greater profits out of working people at home. Biden presented nothing to offer workers any protection from this assault. Nor did anyone else in the "rebuttals" that followed from both Republicans and Democrats.

While workers and farmers confront falling real wages and persistent unemployment, Biden claimed that on his watch "more jobs [were] created in one year than ever before." In fact, this just reflects the vast number of workers tossed out of work during pandemic shutdowns pushed by both Biden and Donald Trump before him.

There are still 2.3 million less workers in the labor force than before the pandemic. And the percentage of women participating in the workforce today has fallen, amid skyrocketing costs for child care and declining choices about how to raise a family. Over 4 million workers, especially in retail and restaurants, wanted full-time work but could only get part-time hours.

Seeking to maximize profits, bosses over the last year at Kellogg's and elsewhere forced strikes on workers across the country, as they pushed mandatory overtime, 12-hour shifts and life-draining schedules.

Biden lamented his failure to get enough support from fellow Democrats to pass a \$2 trillion "Build Back Better" bill loaded with largesse for the employing class and "climate control" schemes. He repackaged pieces of it in his March 1 address, including funding to build 500,000 electric car charging stations.

Biden blames Trump for Putin's war

The day after the State of the Union address, Biden claimed the Jan. 6, 2021, break-in at the U.S. Capitol by some supporters of former President Trump encouraged Russian President Vladimir Putin to launch his murderous assaults on the Ukrainian people. "How would you feel if you saw crowds storm and break down the doors of the British Parliament and kill five cops, injure 145 — or the German Bundestag or the Italian Parliament?" Biden said.

Democrats are using the Jan. 6 break-in to portray the former president as a criminal, hoping to bring charges that will prevent him from running in 2024. A wing of the Republicans share these goals, convinced Trump is a barrier to them reaping the benefits of Biden's unpopularity.

In a step reflecting Democratic Party divisions, the president's State of the Union speech was followed by three "rebuttals" from Democrats. Rashida Tlaib, from the Democrats socialist wing, demanded the party push the entire stalled Build Back Better plan, and blamed other Democrats for its failure. Letting Tlaib respond to Biden was like "slashing your own tires," Democratic Rep. Josh Gottheimer complained.

These divisions reflect the political crisis facing the capitalist rulers, who see neither party capable of running a stable government, nor steering a self-confident course for their interests at home or abroad. At the same time, they increasingly fear that working people will less and less look to them for solutions.

"Workers need our own party, a labor party, based on our unions," Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress from New Jersey, told workers as she campaigned against Moscow's war on Ukraine independence.

"It would organize and educate all the exploited and oppressed, to take on the attacks of the bosses and their government and to fight to replace their rule with a workers and farmers government," she said.